

## to see you in my clothes by orphan\_account

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## to see you in my clothes

*When did he get so damn skinny?* Mike thought to himself as he watched Will change into a borrowed yellow sweatshirt and a pair of grey sweatpants; both huge on his tiny frame. Will was staying over at Mike's house as his mom and Hopper were taking a weekend holiday to Chicago, however he had forgotten his pyjamas, hence why he was currently rolling up sleeves and pant legs that extended over his hands and feet. Watching still, red flags were going off in Mike's head, Will's wrists were scarily small, blue and purple veins obvious under his paper-thin skin and bones protruding. His ankles were far too tiny, once again bones stuck out to the point that his skin looked whiter where they were.

Mike felt almost unwell at the sight of Will so sickly, he cursed at himself for not noticing quite how small Will was; of course, he had seen before that the boy was smaller in height, being a head shorter than Mike himself was hard not to notice, but it was the general lack of any body that he hadn't really thought about before.

Just before he said goodnight to Will and turned the light out, he made a mental note to make sure Will was eating enough over the next weekend, and if he wasn't, do something about it.

It began with breakfast, more specifically, Will's refusal of it. Mike had offered cereal, toast, even Eggos, Will wanted none of it; content with a glass of orange juice. This only played further to Mike's concern about Will, though he didn't have enough information to make a confrontation, so he sat silently worried whilst munching on a piece of toast. Watching as Will sipped his orange juice, looking around the homey Wheeler kitchen, Mike saw something else he'd never noticed before. Red, bruise-like marks at the knuckle of Will's index finger and middle finger.

It meant nothing to him at the time, though it would become a clear sign to Mike that maybe Will's state was intentional; however, he thought it was probably just something still healing from the events of early November, and as that was only a month and a half ago, it

was very possible.

Mike finished his toast and suggested that they could go down to the basement and watch a movie on the TV he'd persuaded his dad to install, Will agreed quickly and they did just that.

They decided to watch Star Wars: Return of The Jedi, even though it wasn't their favourite of the trilogy, it was the only one Mike had on VHS, and all the other movies were either coming of age films (belonging to Karen and Nancy) or horror films. Mike hadn't even considered offering a horror movie, he knew how Will got around any sort of reminder of the two terrible events he'd been through. He had made sure to hide The Exorcist at the bottom of a drawer, just the idea of the film could likely upset his best friend.

Half-way through the movie, just as the Ewoks had been introduced, Mike noticed Will had fallen asleep. It was certainly odd, seeing as it was only 11:30am and they had woken up at 8:45; however, Mike simply lowered the volume of the TV and made sure Will, who was leaning against him, was warm enough by throwing a blanket over them both.

Mike found himself running his hands through Will's hair, the movie had long ended, and it was time for lunch. He was very careful when waking Will up, not wanting to scare him in any way he shook his shoulder whispering.

Only slightly jolted (which was to be expected after all that had happened) Will awoke.

"Hey Will?" Mike was close to his face, looking slightly concerned.

"Mike?" Will was delirious, feeling like he still might be in a dream; he quickly pinched himself and concluded that he was in fact awake.

"Yeah, it's me, it's Mike." Mike was smiling, relieved. "Are you feeling okay? You fell asleep..."

Will, now aware that he was in the Wheeler basement, covered in a blanket he didn't recognise and still dressed in Mike's sweats, didn't

feel too great at all. He thought if he tried to stand up on his own he might pass out.

“I don’t know, I feel a bit weird.” Will confessed, rubbing the residue of sleep from his eyes.

“It’s lunch time, do you think something to eat might make you feel better?” Mike asked, hopefully, he guessed Will was like this because he hadn’t eaten much and didn’t have any energy.

Suddenly Will tensed and his face showed signs of panic, he opened his mouth as if to speak and quickly averted his gaze from Mike’s intense stare of worry.

“Will...?” Mike metaphorically put his foot down and pulled up the boy by his arms, steadying him when he stumbled. “We’re going upstairs and you’re going to have something to eat, and then you’re going to explain what the hell is going on in that little head of yours.”

Not having any choice in the matter, Will nodded solemnly and let Mike drag him by the arm up the stairs out of the basement and into the kitchen. The house was empty, Karen and Ted both at work, Nancy out with ‘friends’ (aka on a date with Jonathan) and Holly, at day-care.

“I’m going to make you a sandwich, you want peanut butter or strawberry jelly, or both?” Mike asked, in a somewhat motherly fashion; probably picking up from Steve.

“Peanut butter.” Will huffed, he wanted to go back to bed and not be forced to eat something.

This whole avoidance of food had started a month prior, just after the ‘Mind-Flayer’ was expelled from his body, he hadn’t been in control; the beast could do what it liked, Will just had to watch as it used him as a host. He wanted to be in control again, so he took the first thing he didn’t like about himself and decided to control that. It just happened to be his body. He had a reputation of being the smallest and skinniest, the idea of *not* being that was scary; he liked the familiarity of it, it reminded of happier times.

So, watching Mike Wheeler, his best friend since the first day of kindergarten, push a plate of 300+ calories in the form of two slices of white bread and a hearty slathering of peanut butter, was bound to make Will feel quite uncomfortable. Regardless, he knew if he didn't eat the damn thing he would upset Mike, and after all the boy had done for him, hurting him was the last thing he wanted to do.

He ate it slowly, scolding himself for enjoying it, Mike watched attentively, making sure Will didn't do a magic trick and make the sandwich disappear without eating it.

"Now," Mike began, taking the now empty plate with a smug look on his face, "What's up with you, Will?"

Will took a deep breath and thought for a moment, remembering Eleven's favourite phrase 'Friends don't lie' and taking another deep breath, damning her for getting that honesty policy put in place.

He explained, not once making eye contact with the boy listening to his each and every word.

"Oh Will." Mike sighed, coming to the boy's side and wrapping two arms around his little form, "Whatever are we going to do about you?"

"Dunno, I'm a bit of a lost cause, me." Will crumpled into Mike's shoulder.

They stayed like that for a while, head on each other's shoulders. Eventually Mike suggested that they might go back downstairs to the basement which was much more comfortable and private than the cold kitchen with big windows.

Once down in the basement, they reclaimed their comfy movie watching positions, though this time the only thing they watched was each other. Mike held Will as tightly as he could, thinking about how much he'd love for the boy to be happy, not knowing that simply his presence was helping the smallest Byers feel a whole lot more whole.